

EAP 223 Academic Reading – Outside Reader: *Things Fall Apart*
PREREADING ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ACHEBE, Chinua 1930

Chinua Achebe was born on November 16, 1930, in Ogidi, Nigeria. He was raised in this traditional village, although his parents were Christians. Achebe considers himself part of a generation that is in transition between the old village ways and the modern world.

Mr. Achebe began his career with the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, where he worked from 1954-1966. After that he became a senior research fellow at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and then a professor of English. From 1972-75 he was a visiting professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, and was a visiting professor of English at the University of Connecticut in 1975-76.

Things Fall Apart was his first novel, published in 1958. This novel established him as a major contemporary novelist. Many adult and children's books followed his first success: *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *The Sacrificial Egg and Other Stories* (1962), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of People* (1966), *Chike and the River* (1966), *Beware Soul-Brother and Other Poems* (1971), *The Insider: Stories of War and Peace from Nigeria* (1971), *How the Leopard Got His Claws* (1972), *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1973), *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (1975), *The Flute* (1977), and *The Drum* (1977). Achebe is also the founding editor of the African Writers series published by Heinemann Books.

Chike and the River, published in 1966, was his first children's novel. It is about the adventures of a young boy. *The Flute* is a retelling of a traditional African folktale with some added details. *How the Leopard Got His Claws* is an animal fable which he wrote during the Biafran War.

Chinua Achebe has received many awards, including The Nigerian National Merit Award for intellectual achievement (1970), the Commonwealth Poetry Prize (1974), and the Lotus Award for Afro-Asian Writers (1975). He has honorary degrees from universities in the United States, Scotland, England, Canada, and Nigeria.

Mr. Achebe now lives in New York with his wife and four children. He and his wife both teach at Bard College.